THE CROWN *and* GLORY OF A Christian,

Consisting in a Sound

CONVERSION

And Well Ordered

CONVERSATION.

The Third Edition.

Psal. 50. 33. *To him that orders his Conversation aright will I give to see the salvation of God.*

Luk. 12. 23. *Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good also.*

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Courteous Reader;

THE Authors deſign was to reduce the whole of Mans Being, Buſineſs, and Bleſſedneſs, into as few lines as might be, thereby to invite a ſober peruſal of them; as alſo to let men ſee, That the Chriſtian Religion *is Plain, its Precepts clear, and its Practiſe eaſie, to them on whom God hath wrought a ſaving Change, or true Converſion; which is the firſt thing treated of; the next is, to ſhew the Chriſtian how to carry himſelf in Natural, Civil and Religious Duties. If thou readeſt it with a deſire of ſpiritual advantage (which was the end and prayer of the Author) God may bleſs it to thee; and both thou and the Author have cauſe (as for all his bleſſings) to praiſe him for this.*

Farewell.

First, Of Preparation to

Chriſtianity.

1. YOu muſt look upon true Chriſtianity to be of abſolute neceſſity, and an indiſpenſable duty: you cannot live without it, and you dare not die without it. Wo to you, if you die before you live; if you die to the world, before you live to God; and if you go out of the World, before Jeſus Chriſt come into your heart: be ſure that Chriſt be in you, ſo may he bring the hope of glory, *Col.* 1. 27. and that you be in Chriſt, ſo muſt be broke off from the wild olive of the old *Adam*, Rom. 11. 24. which two makes up the true Chriſtian.

2. You cannot attain to true Chriſtianity, until you be born again, [or from above] *Joh.* 3. 3, 5. until you can experience

the death and burial of the old *Adam*, and the Reſurrection of the New. You muſt be unmade to ſin, 1 *Pet.* 2. 24. and then made up again for God. 'Tis not ſcraping the walls of the houſe of the fretting Leproſie, that will ſerve the turn, *Lev*, 14. 14, 44. but all the Timber, and all the Stones thereof muſt be thrown down to the ground that a new building may be erected in its ſtead.

3. Be ſure, this can never be attained until you come to a ſound and ſaving knowledg, both of your ſelf and Chriſt: (1) Of the emptineſs and vileneſs of your ſelf, ſo as to deny, abhor and abandon your ſelf; and (2) Of Chriſts excellency and all-ſufficiency, ſo as to value him your all, and above all; Indeed a full Chriſt and a vile nothing creature agrees beſt together.

4. 'Twill be both your prudence and advantage to forbear the ſearching after the knowledg of other things, until you come to a ſolid knowledg of your ſelf, which is the one thing needful in Chriſtianity, and whereof Heatheniſm had ſome rude notion; to know your ſelf to be loſt

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in your self, and never found again till you be [Found] in Christ, *Phil.* 3. 9.

5. The more that you know your self, the greater will your self-abhorrency be, *Job* 42. 6. This will make you cry out with *Augustine*, [*a malo homine* [me ipso] *libera me domine*:] From that evil man (my self) Oh Lord, deliver me. You will find that though Satan be your great Enemy, yet your own sinful self is the worst: for Satan might strike fire long enough without success, if your own evil heart did not find him Tinder: the Tempter may besiege the City long enough to no purpose, if there were not a treacherous party within, that lets down the Draw-bridge, and sets open the Gates to his Troops of Temptations.

6. This knowledg of your self will bring also greater dis-satisfaction with your present state and standing in wayes of unregeneracy, with your being without God, & without Christ in the World; making you cry out not only Unclean, unclean; but also Undone, undone; give me Christ or I die, and that to all Eternity: I am condemned

already, *John.* 3.18. and the wrath of God abides upon me, *v.* 36. Oh, who dares live in an Houſe that is haunted with evil Spirits! or lodge in a Cave that abounds with noyſome Toads and venemous Serpents! ſuch and far worſe is your lying in an unrenewed eſtate.

7. When you behold the avenger of blood, to wit, Divine Juſtice purſuing you at the heels, his heart being hot within him, as *Deut.* 19.6. then it is high time for you to haſten to that bleſſed City of Refuge the moſt excellent and all-ſufficient Lord Jeſus, who was purpoſely provided of the Father, to be a Saviour and Sanctuary to ſave us both from preſent wrath, and from wrath to come alſo, 2 *Theſſ.* 1.10. He is that Name of the Lord which the righteous run [into] and are ſafe, *Prov.* 18.10.

8. In ſo doing, know for your incouragement, that the gates of the Sanctuary and City of Refuge ſhall not be ſhut againſt you. Firſt, the place of Chriſts birth encourages, which was an Inn: He was born in one *of Bethlehem's* Inns, a place that receives all comers; all gueſts that come are bid welcome. 2. The

2. The posture of his death; Christ died upon the Cross with his Arms spread wide asunder, as in a posture ready to embrace all penitent sinners that come unto him, and fall into his arms. *Him that cometh unto me, I will* [*in no wise*] *cast out, or keep out*, Joh.6.37.

9. And though you cannot run, or come fast enough to Christ, yet Christ will come and run to you, and meet you better half way. While the penitent Prodigal did but [come] towards his Father, his Father ran to meet him, *and had compassion upon him, and fell on his neck and kissed him*, Luk. 15 20. Christ will be much better to you, than you will or can be to your self; *for he* [*can*] *have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way*, Heb.5.2. and though you cannot bring your self to grace, yet grace is [brought] to you by Christ.

2. *Of Carriage under the first workings of Christianity.*

1: When the Lord Jesus comes and stands knocking at the door of your heart, with the hammer of his word, and with the hand of his Spirit, then bow your self with

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all your might (as *Samſon* did) *Judg.* 16. 30. to pull back every bolt, and to draw in every bar, that would keep the door ſhut againſt this bleſſed and bleeding Redeemer. The duty indeed is yours, but the ability is his: as much as in you lies, cauſe every luſt of your heart to make room for your dear Jeſus.

2. Welcom Chriſt into your heart with joy. Say to him as *Laban* did to *Abraham's* Servant, *Come in thou bleſſed of the Lord,* [*thou art welcome*] *wherefore ſtandeth thou without?* Gen. 24. 31. Chriſt will come to you with a bleſſing in his hand to beſtow on you, as he did to *Jacob.* Gen. 32. 26, *&c.* *David* literal-ſaith to his Son (that invited him to his houſe) *Why ſhould we be chargeable to thee, my Son?* 2 Sam. 13. 25. But this *David* ſpiritual will not be chargeable: whereſoever he comes, where he comes to ſup with any ſoul, he brings his ſupper with him, *Rev.* 3. 20. and eats but of his own honey-comb, and of his own honey, *Cant.* 5. 1. This bleſſed Gueſt brings his bleſſing with him, as the Ark did to the houſe of *Obed Edom.*

3. When Chriſt is come into your houſe

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to dwell in your heart by faith, *Epheſ.* 3. 17. be careful to keep his habitation quiet and comfortable; to this end you muſt adjure your corruptions *by the roes and by the hinds of the field, that they ſtir not up nor awake your beloved until he pleaſe*, Cant. 2. 7. 'Tis pity ſuch a bleſſed Gueſt ſhould meet with any diſturbance; lay Gods charge upon your luſts, ſaying to them as *Lot* did to the *Sodomites*, Gen. 19. 8 *Only unto this Angel of the Lord, and this Lord of Angels, do nothing* [*of diſturbance*] *for therefore came he under the ſhadow of my roof*: and as the good old man to the men of *Gibeah*, Judg. 19. 23. *Nay, I pray you do not ſo wickedly, ſeeing this man* (Chriſt Jeſus) *is come into my houſe, do not this folly to diſturb him.*

4. Be oft admiring that bleſſed ſtate of Grace which God hath brought you into, out of the curſed ſtate of ſin, and ſay with *Peter* at Chriſts transfiguration, *Maſter, 'tis good being here; let us build Tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moſes, and one for Elias*; not one for himſelf, for he was ſo pleaſed with his preſent condition, that he could be content to lie out of doors, ſo he might

might enjoy the vision of his Masters glory, *Mat:*17:5:&c: Say you with the *Hebrew* Servant, *I love my Master, he shall bore me through the ear, and I will stay with him for ever*, Deut:15:16,17: and with *David*, you must resolve *to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever*, Psal:23:6: *The purpose of your heart must be to cleave unto the Lord.*

5: Be oft searching your heart in the sense, 1; Of the state of sin, out of which (*as* Israel *out of the house of bondage, and out of the Iron furnace*, Deut:4:20:) your God, your near kinsman, the Lord Jesus hath deliver'd you. 2: Of the remainders of sin, from which you are not cleansed to this day, you cannot chide it out of doors as *Sarah* did *Hagar*; you cannot shake it from off your heart as *Paul* did the Viper from off his hand; 'tis as *Daniel's* Beasts, *whose dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a time and a season*, Dan:7:12: this will ballast your new-found joy.

6. Let your own self-righteousness stink and be abhorred by you, when the Righteousness of Christ is brought to clothe you: The father brings forth the best Robe for his ragged prodigal, *Luk:*15:22: When the first

firſt *Adam* had made himſelf naked by his ſin, he ſowed fig-leaves together, and made himſelf an apron; this was both too thin and too ſcant a covering, *but the Lord made a coat of skins* (of the Sacrifices) *and clothed them*, Gen:3: 7, 21: alas your own righteouſneſs is but a fig-leaf covering, no better than dogs-meat, or dung in *Pauls* ey *Phil:*3:8: in compariſon of that coat made of the skin of the Lamb of God, which is call'd *the righteouſneſs of God*, and therefore a better righteouſneſs than that which *Adam* had, or that which Angels have; a garment or robe that covers the whole ſinner from the angry eyes of offended Juſtice.

7 Hunger after a taſt and touch of Chriſt in the pureſt and powerfulleſt way of revealing himſelf to you in his ordinances; ſet your ſelf under no means of Grace, without begging of God to ſpeak to your heart with a ſtrong hand, as he did to the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Iia: 8: 11: think it not enough that the Miniſtry (you ſit under) is a *lovely ſong* to you, as *Ezek:*33:32: but it muſt be a *lively* ſong alſo, that you may ſay with *David*, *Gods word hath quickened me*, *Pſal:*119:50.

A divine touch in Gods Ordinances doth quicken us in Gods way, *Psal.* 119.37. You must know that Christ hath many followers, and but few touchers; when the multitude throng'd him, he had but one that touch'd him, so as to receive healing vertue from him, *Mat* 9.20. *Luk.* 8.43—46.

8. Get solid proof of your interest in Christ: build not upon sandy foundations, such as 1. On *general mercy*, as if he that made you, will undoubtedly save you: If so, then Devils would be saved as well as men, for God made both, and both are his creatures, 2. Nor *on good meanings*; if those would save you, then the Word of God, and the blood of Christ are two superfluous things. Nor 3. *On an external Profession*, for the house of the foolish builder was (for ought we know to the contrary) as fair a Fabrick to look upon in externals, as that of the wise: and the main difference lay in the differing foundation, *Mat.* 7.24.26. The Rock of ages (the Lord Jesus) was not the foundation of both, but loose earth, loose notions and principles, such as those beforementioned.

9. Be not poring and puzling too long about

about laying your foundation; but having once laid Christ (alone) your foundation, go then on to build upon it, [*strato superstruitur*] God saith to the Children of *Israel, they must go forward*, Exod 14,15: you must neither stand still, nor step backward, *Non progredi est regredi*, not to go on, is to go back: 'Tis undoubtedly one of the wiles of Satan, and his devices, (which we are not to be ignorant of) to gravel gracious spirits about that foundation-truth of their Election, to keep them from making passage and progress in ways of Christianity; our Lord himself was thus buffeted, in Satan's saying to him, once and again [*If thou be the Son of God.*] If this were done to that green tree, what can the dry expect? Whereas, if you can make your calling sure (in the witnessings of the Holy Ghost) you must take your Election for granted, seeing that Election-love is the cause and vocation-love the effect; now the effect is the manifestation of the cause; do but make your calling sure; and therein you make your election sure also, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10.

10. Take heed you blot nor blur not your Evi-

Evidences for Heaven by any looſe and extravagant Actions; for ſuppoſe you cannot (if you be a true Chriſtian) loſe your Salvation, yet may you loſe the joy of your Salvation, as *David* did, *Pſal.* 51:12: This indeed is the bleſſing of the Covenant of Grace, that though it doth permit a fall, yet alwayes enſures Repentance after the fall: notwithſtanding, you may get ſuch falls as may break your bones, and it may coſt you both much pain, and much pains, before the Lord make you *to hear of joy and gladneſs, that the bones which are broken* (by your fall) *may rejoyce*, Pſal; 51:8:

3: *Of the Exerciſe of Spiritual Life.*

1: Walk cloſe with God in your general and particular calling, and be careful that the one do not juſtle out the other; as there is a time for all things, ſo there is a time for both thoſe: your general calling muſt not thruſt out your particular; that is but a temptation, and not a duty; neither muſt your particular calling thruſt out your general, for that is to love the world more than God, and to ſerve your ſelf altogether and not the Lord Chriſt at all. It was

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the ſin of *Cain*, that he did not divide aright for God, the duties of your general calling (faithfully performed) muſt ſanctifie all the duties of your particular calling.

2. Be oft at home communing with your own heart, *Pſal.* 4. 4. and propounding queſtions to it, ſuch as theſe. 1. Whoſe am I? Am I one that belongs to God, or do I belong to Satan? 2. Whom ſerve I? do I ſerve Chriſt, or do I ſerve Sin? The bleſſed Apoſtle could anſwer both theſe queſtions, *Act.* 27. 23. *There ſtood by me this night the Angel of God, whoſe I am, and whom I ſerve.* And 3. What am I? am I a veſſel of wrath, or am I a veſſel of mercy? am I a child of God, or am I a child of the devil? 4. Where am I? *Adam where art thou?* as God ſaid ſo to *Adam*, ſo you muſt ſay to your own ſoul. Where art thou Soul? art thou in the broad way that leads to death and damnation, or art thou in the narrow way that leads to Salvation? & if at any time you find your ſpirit looſe & extravagant in broad wayes of the World, then cry to your ſelf, as God to *Elijah*, *What doſt thou here Elijah?* 1 *King.* 19. 13. ſo gird up the loins of your mind again, *Luk.* 12. 35.

3. Know that your heart will be backward to this communing work, *Fugitivi ſumus à cordibus noſtris*, ſaith *Auguſtine*; we flee from our own hearts, and our own hearts flee as faſt and as far from us. 'Tis pity we ſhould carry hearts about with us in our boſoms for twenty, thirty, forty or fifty years, (ſome more if ſome leſs) and yet be ſuch ſtrangers to them, and they to us; account it therefore your great loſs that you know your own heart no better, that you commune with it no oftener; alas, we know not our own hearts, *Am I a Dog*, (ſaith *Hazael*) *that I ſhould do ſo and ſo?* 2 King. 8.13, Yet ſuch a Dog was he in wickedneſs when he came to his opportunity; you muſt tremble to be left in the hands of your own counſel, as *Hezekiah* was left to himſelf, to try him (not the ſtrength of his grace, as *Abraham* was, *Gen.* 22.1. but his frailty and proneneſs to ſin) and to let him know all that was in his heart 2 *Chron.* 32.31. When Satans Temptations hath an opportunity to draw out your corruption, then and there is your moſt eminent danger.

4. Seeing your heart will not ſtand to parley

parley, do you bind it to good beheavour, and lay God's charge upon it that it ſtir not in this parleying work, till you have made ſome work of your work, & brought it to ſome bleſſed iſſue; know, that never did the Sacrifice (under the Law) ſtand more in need of binding with cords to the horns of the Alter, than your looſe and ſlippery heart doth with all obligations (and all little enough) unto holy duties; hence is it that ſelf-examination is ſo hard a duty; no ſooner are we in it, but ere ever we be aware, we are out of it again.

5. When ye have, through grace, fixed your heart, and are able to ſay with *David*, *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed*, *Pſal.* 57. 7: which undoubtedly is as hard to fix to good, as quick-ſilver is, that hath a principle of motion in it, but not of reſt, then fall upon Conſideration-work, which is the excellency of a man above the beaſt; then conſider, and better conſider the four queſtions aforeſaid. and the tendency of all your wayes: *Ponder the path of thy feet*, Prov. 4. 26. to wit, by the weights of the Word of God, do you oft poize them;

Conſideration is the ſtay of our thoughts, which are as ſwift as any Ship. Conſideration is as an Anchor to them. God bids his People *Conſider their wayes*, twice over, *Hag.* 1. 5,7. do it once and again.

6. You may know where you are, if you ſeriouſly and throughly conſider the frame of your own ſpirit; the way to hell is a broad way; and he that is all for elbow room, and for a wide way to be extravagant in, and likes not the ſtrict way of Religion (which is ſo called from its ſtrict binding up our hearts from looſneſs *a religando*) is a broad-way man, that ſayes, with *Jeroboam*, *'Tis too much for you to go up to Jeruſalem*, 1 King. 12. 28. 'Tis too much for you to be ſo much preciſe, and ſo ſtrait laced; *Let us break thoſe bands aſunder, and caſt away thoſe cords from us*, Pſal. 2. 3. *Medice vivere, eſt miſere vivere*, to live ſtrictly by a Rule, is to live miſerably, both for ſoul and body. *Spiritus Religioſus eſt ſpiritus melancholicus*; *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we ſhall dy*, *Iſa.* 22. 12, 14, 1 *Cor.* 15. 32.

7. You have this exemplified in *Noah's* Raven and Dove, *Gen* 8: 7,9, 11: You may not

not be as the Raven that was accuſtom'd to live at large, becomes weary of being caged up in the Ark, and likes not ſuch ſtrait limits any longer, therefore ſhe flutters about the Ark, but went not in, as not willing to be confined to the Ark either for diet or lodging any more, but chuſes rather to fly abroad, and feed upon the carcaſes of the drowned.

8. You muſt be like the Dove which did not diſlike her confinement, nor the diet and lodging of the Ark, and therefore returns to it as the place of her reſt, and beſt repoſe, not finding better repaſt any where elſe. Thus thoſe are unclean Ravens, that are all for fleſhly liberty and licentiouſneſs, and can feed upon ſtinking carrion of wickedneſs; but you muſt be Chriſt's Dove, *Cant*: 2:14: that can find no reſt for the ſoles of your feet but in him; you muſt (with others) flock to the Temple, *Iſa*: 60. 8. Chriſt your *Noah*, your Comforter, will put forth his hand to take you in; and there think his ſervice your wages, as well as your work, and not your wearineſs.

9: Thus muſt you be ſerious in inquiring of your ſelf, whoſe you are, and whom you

ſerve; Yea, and what you are, as well as where? whether in the broad or narrow way: If conſideration be needful in all our undertakings, how much more in that for Eternity! Oh, be not ſlight herein, but dwell with your thoughts upon it. You know, he that rides poſt through a Countrie, can never draw a diſtinct Map of that Countrie, which requires many pauſes for viewing every particular boundary, &c: So if you ride poſt with your ſwift thoughts in your circuit thorough the Iſle of Man, you cannot take a diſtinct account of your ſelf in order to thoſe four grand Queſtions: You muſt walk round about your ſelf, and go round that little world, as they did about Sion, *Pſal.* 48. 12,13. *That they might tell the towers thereof, and mark well her bulwarks; yea, and* [*conſider*] *her Palaces*, &c.

10. Then hath your ſpiritual conſideraon, a bleſſed iſſue, when you dwell upon it with your fixed thoughts, untill Chriſt appear your chiefeſt good, and ſin your chiefeſt evil: *David* did *turn* [*his*] *wayes upſide down*, as the *Hebrew* word [*chiſhabli daraki*] ſignifies, *Pſal.* 119. 59. *In his*

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own ſecret thoughts and conſideration. The Noun of which Verb, to wit *cheſheb*, ſignifies, *opus phrygionicum*, an embroider'd garment, which is the ſame on both ſides, they that work them muſt often turn them, firſt on one ſide, and then on the other. Thus *David would turn* [*his*] *way every way*, and muſt have them both ſides alike, both that ſide towards God, and that ſide towards man; for the wayes of many men have a ſhining outſide towards man, and yet their inſide is rugged, uneven, and uncomely towards God. *Sordet in conſpectu judicis, quod fulget in conſpectu aperentis* (ſaith the Father) but Chriſt ſaith better, *That which is highly eſteemed among men is an abomination in the ſight of God*, Luk. 16. 15.

11. As you muſt turn [your] wayes every way, and upſide down, according to the *Hebrew* reading of that, *Pſal.* 119. 59. So muſt you make a Dialogue with your ſelf according to the *Greek* reading. The *Septuagent* reads it [διελογισαμην] *I made a Dialogue with my ſelf about my own wayes*; I argued this point to an iſſue, whether the wayes of God, or the wayes of Sin were better; and when I underſtood that the

paths of Sin go down to death, I turned my feet from the wayes of Sin to the ways of God. Thus must you upon sound consideration, and deliberation find out Sin to be the way to God's curse, but Christ the way to God's blessing. *He is* [*the*] *way*, *Joh.* 14. 6. *Walk in him*, *Col.* 2. 6.

12. When Sin appears to you the greatest evil (as Christ the greatest good) then you cannot let any Sin live peaceably in you, no nor come peaceably to you, be it little or great; you must have tenderness of spirit: *Josiah* had a *tender heart*, 2 *King.* 22. 19. 2 *Chron.* 34. 27. Such as are of tender constitutions cannot endure the least cold wind to blow upon them, therefore they cry [shut the Casement, and bolt the Door] I shall catch cold; thus to a tender heart, the least cold air of Sin is irksome: The door of your heart must be shut against Sin (the greatest evil) yet open for Christ, the chief good, *Ezek.* 44. 2, 3. *That door is for the Prince, the Prince of Life*, no other guest must enter in.

4. *Of your Conversation respecting both others and your self.*

2. In

1. In reſpect of others, both thoſe without and within.

1. To thoſe without.

1. You muſt walk wiſely to them, and honeſtly with them, *Col.* 4. 5: Neither giving offence careleſly, nor taking offence cauſeleſly, 1 *Cor:* 10 32. *Giving no offence to any, either Greek or Jew, walking handſomly* (as the word εὐχημονως ſignifies) 1 *Theſ.* 4: 12. *That by your well-doing, you may not only put to ſilence the Ignorance of fooliſh men, ſtopping their mouths from ſpeaking evil of you,* 1 *Pet.* 2: 15: But alſo by your convincing life cauſe them to open their mouths in commending you, that all which ſee you, may acknowledg you that you are a ſeed *which the Lord hath bleſſed,* Iſa. 61: 9.

2. You may not be conformed to the corrupt cuſtoms and courſes of this preſent evil world, *Rom:* 12: 2: Eſpecially thoſe that are ſet down, *Rom.* 13: 13: *Eph:* 4: 18, 19, 20: 1 *Pet:* 4: 3: Plain *Jacob* can never be comly in the rough garments of prophane *Eſau*: But you muſt be transformed (or metamorphoſed) by the renewing of your heart and life; the old frame muſt be diſſolved, and a new one acquired, that you

you may prove (by your practice) what is good, that perfect and acceptable will of God, and ſhew to all men, that [*Ego non ſum Ego*] I am not the ſame man I was, (as the Convert did to the Harlot ſoliciting him again to leudneſs) that all may behold an heart-changing, and a life-changing work wrought effectually in you:

3 Be careful that the World out-ſtrip you not in any moral action; you may not do leſs than others, when your Lord commands *you to do more than others*, Mat:5:47: as Chriſt hath done ſingular things for you (in ſhewing you ſingular grace and mercy) ſo he both expects and requires ſingular things from you; you muſt be eminent in good works, *Tit:*2:14: and get above others, having your feet where other mens heads are; *The way of the righteous is above to the wiſe*, Prov: 15:24: He goes an higher way to work than the ordinary frame of the world; he knows, that more than the common ſtint is required of him, he muſt do that which the world will never do, and that is, he muſt walk accurately, endeavouring to get up to the very top of godlineſs, as the word in the original ſignifies, *Eph:*5:15:

4. Let your righteouſneſs and innocency be as a breaſt-plate and brazen wall to you againſt all reproaches; knowing aſſuredly, that there will be a Reſurrection of Names as well as of Bodies at the laſt, *Pſal.* 37. 6, *God will bring forth your Righteouſneſs as the morning light*; though the earth be covered with darkneſs while night laſts, yet the morning drives it away; while your life gives your reproachers the lie, God will clear up your wronged innocency; dirt may ſtick upon a mud-wall, but it will not do ſo upon Marble.

5. Evermore account it better for you to ſuffer an hundred injuries, rather than to offer one; the latter will bring guilt on you, but the former comfort. Had *David* ſhed the blood of *Nabal*, &c. (from which he was prevented by *Abigals* prudence) it would undoubtledly have been greater grief, and offence of heart to him (as ſhe told him, 1 *Sam.* 25. 31: Than all his ſorrows and ſufferings from bloody *Saul*. *Abigal* argued thus with him, As thou never took revenge heretofore, ſo thou may not now; and *David* bleſſes God for preventing him, *verſ.* 32.

6. Be-

6: Beware the ſociety of ſuch perſons from which you cannot come off without either guilt or grief, and amongſt whom you muſt either countenance Sin, or contract ſin: while *Peter* was warming his hands amongſt the enemies of Chriſt in the Hall, *Luk*: 22: 55, 56, &c: Alas, his heart froze into a ſtupefaction, which melted not till a look of love from the Son of Righteouſneſs kindly thawed it again, *verſ*: 61: As the Sun of the Firmament doth when it looks upon a bank of ſnow. Evil company is contagious, and Sin is more catching than the plague; *Peter* out of curioſity (to ſee the iſſue of Chriſt's Captivity) ſat with the ſervants of Chriſt's murderers, and ſo tempts Satan to tempt him; no doubt but the damoſel was ſet on by the devil to occaſion *Peters* denying Chriſt.

7: Be not too talkative amongſt thoſe where providence caſts you. Conſider God hath given you two ears, and but one tongue; Yea, and that ſhut up with a double door, the one of fleſh, and the other of bone, to wit, your lips and your teeth; this ſhould teach you to ſpeak ſparingly, and to hear twice as much as you

ſpeak,

ſpeak; and when you ſpeak, let your ſpeech be ſavory, ſeaſoned with ſalt (of a gracious ſpirit) *Col:* 4: 6: the ſalt of which grace muſt preſerve your common communication from putrefaction and rottenneſs; leave you the favour of Grace in all companies where you come.

2: *Your Converſation to thoſe that are within.*

1: As you may not be blind in charity, ſo neither muſt you be raſh in cenſure; 'tis better to be over credulous, than over ſuſpitious, and over cenſorious. God puts a charitable conſtruction upon the caſe of the betrothed Damoſel, *Deut:* 22: 27: As there was none to ſave her, ſo there was none to hear her; yet 'tis taken for granted there, that in ſuch a caſe, ſhe cried out, therefore ſhe ſhall not die: This ſhews us that alwaies in doubtful caſes, we ſhould put on the beſt conſtruction:

2: Be ſure you ſee Grace where Sin is, as well as Sin where Grace is: keep warm your love to thoſe that truly fear God, becauſe of thoſe graces that ſhine forth in them; and take heed of leſſening your love

to

to them, becauſe of thoſe infirmities that do attend them; 'tis pitty the worſt part ſhould be ſeen, and the beſt part either not ſeen, or (at leaſt) not acknowledged; the Lord, himſelf, would not *ſee iniqnity in* Jacob, *nor ſorcery in* Iſrael, *Num.* 23: 21. When there was [*non peccatum flammans*] no flaming ſin at that time among them in his eye and therefore *Balaam* councelled their enemies to entice them to Fornication, which would be a flaming God-provoking Sin; enormities indeed cannot, but infirmities may and ought to be covered with a Mantle of Love; God is a good Copy to write after.

3. Take heed of imitating of the greateſt favourite of heaven in any of his failings; you are compaſſed about with a great cloud of Witneſſes in the ſacred Scriptures, *He.* 12: 1: Yet know that this cloud, like that cloud in the Wilderneſs, hath a black ſide as well as a bright; to wit, their infirmities are recorded, as well as their graces; you may not imitate *Joſeph* in his ſwearing, but you muſt in his chaſtity; you may not follow *Job* in his paſſion and impatiency, but you muſt in his patience and piety; and ſo

of

of the reſt. The frailties of thoſe eminent Saints are regiſtred in Holy Writ, juſt as dangerous Rocks are marked out at Sea, not to run upon them, but to ſhun them: they are penned down as examples of caution, but not of imitation. You muſt know, that they which followed the dark ſide of the Cloud (in the Red-ſea) were *Egyptians*, and were drowned; but they that followed the bright ſide of it, were *Iſraelites*, and paſſed ſafe, not only over the Red-ſea, but into *Canaan*.

4. Have not the Faith of Chriſt with reſpect of perſons, but be careful to love Grace in rags, as well as in robes: Grace may, indeed, commend Gold, but Gold can never commend Grace; the leſſer muſt be the bleſt of the greater: Tis true, that Gold may beautifie the Temple, but 'tis ſtill the Temple that ſanctifies the Gold. Perſons, though never ſo rich, or never ſo richly array'd, are at the beſt but ſilken duſt, and they may be no better than golden damnation.

The ſecond part of your Converſation is that which reſpects your ſelf, &c.

1. Be not quick ſighted abroad, & blind at home; this is to be a *Benzoma*, as the

Hebrews phraiſe it, to be extravagant, or ſeldom at home (as the Harlot, *Pro.*7:11:) ſeldom communing with your own heart; you muſt hate Sin in others, but eſpecially in your ſelf; know that your heart is full of Harlotry; and if you ſeek your ſelf too much abroad, you will (at laſt) find your ſelf but loſt at home; but if you be much at home, as indeed the greateſt part of the work of a Chriſtian lies within doors, then Sin will not dare to haunt your houſe or heart; or however neither ſins little or great can then live peaceably within you.

2: Be ſure you give not place to little ſins, for they will wear away the tenderneſs of your Conſcience, and like little thieves, (creeping in at the window) they will open the door for great ones; little wedges do make way for the greater, and ſo your ſoul may be cloven aſunder thereby: Every Sin, be it ſmall or great, ſhould be a ſtranger to you, and not an home-dweller in you. Thus *David*'s Sin was but a traveller, that came only to viſit him, but not to take up any continuing lodgings within him. Thus 'tis ſaid in *Nathan*'s Parable,

rable *There came a Traveller unto the rich man*, 2 Sam. 12.4. It is Chriſt (and not ſin) that muſt lie all night between the Spouſes breaſts, *Cant.* 1.13. ſhe will have no home-dweller but Chriſt.

3. Live not at random, but ſquare your life by the rule of Righteouſneſs, *to wit*, the Word of God, in thought, Word and Deed; and account every tranſgreſſion of that rule to be your ſin; at night call your faithleſs heart to a faithful account how oft and how much you have come ſhort of that rule the day paſt; a ſenſible frame of ſpirit will eaſily find out, that Gods Commandments are exceeding broad, *Pſal.* 119. 96. but your obedience is exceeding narrow; and that your ſins are more in number than the hairs upon your head, *Pſal.* 40 12. ſo innumerable, that you cannot reckon them, (*who can tell the errors of his life?* Pſal. 19.12) and if you cannot reckon them ſure I am, you can never be able to reckon for them, that muſt be the work of your bleſſed Surety, our dear Lord Jeſus.

4. Let not any one tranſgreſſion of that divine Rule, live peaceably in you, not ſo much as a vain thought muſt take up lodg-

ings in your heart, *Jer.*4.14. as water that is ſprung into a Ship, is preſently pumpt out again in leaky Veſſels, for fear of ſinking; So when any ſoul-ſinking ſin ſprings in upon you (which certainly will come faſter in than water into a veſſel at Sea) then be ſure you ply the Pump of Prayer and Repentance, and never give over pumping, till your Veſſel be cleanſed, and till you have ſome ſenſe that your ſin is pardoned; you will not go to bed with a bone out of joynt, but it muſt be ſet right with expedition; 'tis pity that the ſoul (disjoynted with ſin) ſhould be ſo long neglected.

5. 'Tis a bleſſed frame of ſpirit to nouriſh in you both the ſenſe of your own ſin, and the fear of Gods wrath for your ſin: the heavier that your ſins are to you, the lighter will your afflictions be on you; 'tis wind and rain coming both together, that makes the ſtorm in our ſouls; when your ſin is your burden, 'tis then repented of, and ſo pardoned; this will make your affliction a far lighter burden.

6. Take heed of putting holineſs upon you as a looſe Garment, to caſt off or on at

at pleaſure (according to your differing companies and occaſions:) but be ſure that you gird it cloſe to you with the golden girdle of truth, *Epheſ.*6.14. that in all places you may be what you ſeem to be; that you be to God, what you ſeem to be to man; & that you be to God at all times, what you ſeem to be to man at any time.

7. Take heed of grieving the good Spirit of God, *wherewith you are ſealed to the day of Redemption*, Eph.4.30. and *which is a delicata thing*, as ſome read *Pſal.*143.10.) *res delicata eſt ſpiritus tuus*; and therefore loves to live in a clean houſe, in a clean heart. 'Tis a foul fault to grieve an earthly Father; but 'tis far greater to grieve this holy ſpirit: If you grieve the Holy Ghoſt, how can you expect that he ſhould comfort you? when you are grieved, you cannot do your work as you are wont, and neither can the holy Spirit do his work in and for you: a Gueſt that is grieved, may leave the houſe that grieves him; ſo this delicate thing (the Spirit of God) may leave your houſe deſolate, when grieved with your ſins, *Mat.*23:38. and then wo to you if God and his good ſpirit depart from you, *Heſ.*9.12.

8. But above all, *take heed of quenching the Spirit*, 1 Theſſ.5.19. *to wit*, in his motions and graces: If God have kindled from heaven the holy fire upon the altar of your heart, be careful that it be kept burning there continually (in your love to Chriſt, and zeal for him) it muſt never go out, *Lev.*6:12,13. You muſt ſtir up this fire (as the Apoſtle counſelleth, 2 *Tim.*1.6. and not deſpiſe Prophecying; for the Prieſts lips blows it up into a flame, it may be quenched either by withdrawing of fuel *to wit*, neglect of Ordinances; or by caſting on water, *to wit*, by falling into foul courſes: you muſt beware of both.

9. Be not aſhamed to become a *fool for Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 3.18. Self-conceit, ſelf-will and ſelf-love, (like *Noahs* three Sons) hath ſpread themſelves over the whole world; you muſt deny your own ſelf-conceit and carnal wiſdom: you muſt account your ſelf more bruitiſh than any man, (with *Agur*, Prov:20.2,3.) when you come to *Ithiel* and *Ucal* (which is Chriſt, both goodneſs and power) to be inſtructed in Chriſts School, *Act.*4:13. Remember it was the Devil that ſpake in the ſubtle Serpent, *Gen.*

3.4.

3:4: and it was God that ſpake in the ſilly Aſs, *Numb.*22.28. Remember alſo how it was an Aſs that carried Chriſt to *Jeruſalem* Mat:21:5:

10 Yet, though you muſt be as ſilly as Doves, you muſt alſo be as wiſe as *Serpents*, Mat: 10:16: You muſt have the ſillineſs and the meekneſs of wiſdom, *Jam*: 3: 13: As you muſt be wiſe to Salvation, ſo you may be wiſe to ſafety in Gods way, and not caſt your ſelf upon needleſs dangers; Chriſtianity allows you as much of the Serpent as of the Dove; the Dove without the Serpent is eaſily entangled, and the Serpent without the Dove is venemouſly hurtful; the head of the Serpent, and the heart of the Dove, make up the beſt and the moſt bleſſed compoſition; piety without policy is too ſimple to be ſafe; and policy without piety is too ſubtile to be good.

11 You muſt chuſe any ſuffering rather than the leaſt ſinning; you muſt not chuſe iniquity rather than affliction, *Job* 36:21: for there is more evil in the leaſt ſin than in the greateſt ſufferings, in as much as Moral Evil is far worſe and greater than that which is meerly natural: *Quas*

non ergo oporet mortes præeligere, ſaith, *Zuinglius*, therefore what deaths ought not a man rather to make choice of, what torments not rather undergo; yea, into what deepeſt gulf of Hell it ſelf not rather enter, than wittingly and willingly to ſin the leaſt ſin againſt God? The ancient Martyrs would not accept of deliverance upon ignoble and ſinful terms, *Heb.* 11. 35. They would not throw ſo much as one grain of frankincenſe to the Idol, though it would have ſaved their own lives; hence *Daniel* choſe rather to be caſt to the Lions, than to violate his Conſcience, and ſo to have a Lion roaring in his boſom; he knew that in an angry Conſcience he might feel the unbearable ſtroaks of an angry God; and a man had better anger all the Witches in the world; yea, and all the Devils in hell, than anger God.

12. You may not do the leaſt evil, no, not for the procuring of the greateſt good, *Rom.* 3. 8: *Do no evil, that good may come.* If a lie would ſave your life, you muſt not tell it: Gods People are Children that will not lie (as there Father is a God that cannot lie) *Iſa.* 63. 8: they will rather die than lie.

lie. *Non ideo negare volo, ne peream; ſed ideo mentiri nolo, ne peccem*: I will not therefore deny, leſt I periſh; but therefore will I not lie, leſt I ſin, ſaid the good woman upon the Rack, of whom St. *Jerome* writeth. And *Auſtin* ſaith, that a man ought not to tell a lie, though he might ſave the whole world from hell thereby; for there is more evil in one lie, than there is good (ſaith he) in the ſalvation of all the World: and he would chuſe Hell rather than Sin, if ſet before him for choice. Thus the primitive Chriſtians cried [*Ad leones potius quam ad Lenones*] Throw us to your Lions, rather than to your Harlotry; though this would ſave our lives, yet would it deſtroy our ſouls. The *Armenian* Mouſe will die, (ſome write) rather than be defilled with filth; inſomuch that if her hole be beſmeared with dirt, ſhe rather chuſes to be taken than polluted. Such ought all the ſervants of God to be.

13: Examine your call from God for every action you undertake; be oft crying, [*Quo warranto?*] What warrant have I for this or that from the Lord, whom I ought to obey in all things? And for this end,

mind thoſe four voices, 1: Of Providence how it calls you: 2: Of Conſcience, what ſatisfaction you find there both concerning the lawfulneſs and the expediency of the on: 3: Of the word, which ought to warrant all our actions, as it is the Rule of all Righteouſneſs: And 4*ly:* of the Spirit, which gives its teſtimony to all the aforeſaid (the fruits of the Spirit is in all, *goodneſs, and righteouſneſs, and truth*, Eph: 5. 9:) and witneſſes with our ſpirits that we are in Gods way, and in our own duty: The voice of Providence alone may deceive you as it might have done *David*, had *Abaſhai's* apprehenſions prevailed with him, as 1*Sam* 26: 8: *God hath delivered mine enemy* (Saul) *into thine hand this day*; he would not have *David* to tempt God any longer by letting ſlip this ſo fair an oppertunity; but holy *David* had the three other voices to hearken unto, as well as the voice of Providence *Verſ:* 9, 10, 11: Neither the Word would warrant him, nor his own ſpirit, nor the ſpirit of God; which laſt hinder'd *Paul* and *Silas* from going into *Aſia* and *Bithynia*, Act: 16: 6,7:

14, In things wherein ſelf may ſway, it

is

is ſafeſt for you to be paſſive; in ſuch caſes you will be ſtrongly tempted (both by a ſubtil devil, and by a deceitful heart) to out-run God both in his Promiſes, and in his Providences, as *Iſrael* in *Numb*: 14: 40: *We will go up to the place which the Lord hath Promiſed:* They muſt needs go up that very morning, for ſelf ſwayed their hearts that way, though the pillar of Providence (which was their guide by night, and by day) did not go before them; and though they pleaded Gods promiſe, yet they did not conſider, Gods promiſes are ſealed, but they are not dated: You muſt wait therefore (in ſuch caſes of ſelf) Gods time; your time will be alway ready, when Gods time is not yet, *John*: 7: 6.

You would have your water of affliction turned into the wine of conſolation at your time; but Chriſt ſaith to you as he ſaid to his Mother, *What have I to do with thee woman? mine hour is not yet come*, Joh: 2: 4: The day you ſet down in your Kalender is not the ſame that God ſets down in his; We are all exceeding prone to poſtdate the divine threatnings, and to antidate the divine promiſes: We all *put*

the

the evil day far from us, *Amos*,6: 3: *Ezek*: 12: 27: When God comes in his threatnings, we think he hath leaden feet, and is slow in pace, 2 *Pet*: 3: 49. But when we expect him to come in his promises, then we look upon him as a *Roe*, *and as a young Hind in the Mountains of* Bether.

5. *In watching your heart in natural, civil, and religious actions.*

First in General.

1: Concerning our Natural Actions, as labouring, resting, feeding and clothing, *&c.* you had need keep your heart with all diligence in respect of these, *Prov.* 4. 23, lest you sin in them; for the adversary hath some advantages over gracious spirits in them all: as first that being satisfied about the lawfulness of these actions, Satan will make you overlook the expediency of them. 2. He may (at some time or other) cheat you with divine permission for divine approbation: And 3*ly*, he may likwise deceive you in putting no just difference 'twixt the use and abuse of your Christian liberty.

2. Touch-

2. Touching the firſt of theſe, let ſatan tempt you to any groſs ſin, your heart will riſe with indignation againſt ſuch a foul temptation, and 'twill be a torment to to you to be attempted to it; yea, as much torment to your ſoul, as ſawing aſunder, and being ſlain with the ſword is torment to the body, *Heb.* 11: 37: to be tempted, is there placed betwixt thoſe two kinds of death, as if it were equally dolorous with either or both of them, ſo that foul ſins do not ſo much endanger your ſoul, as it is in thoſe lawful actions, wherein Satan may ſlily and inſenſibly beguile you out of a lawfulneſs, into an expediency.

3; Touching the ſecond of them, you muſt learn this diſtinction from God's Word, that though God permitted polygamy and divorces under the *Jewiſh* Pœdagogy, yet it was only for the hardneſs of their hearts, *Mat.* 19. 8. *But it was not ſo from the beginning*, ſaith Chriſt; that Divine diſpenſation (for better an inconvenience than a miſchief) makes but little for the lawfulneſs of it, neither can it amount to a Divine approbation.

4. Touching the third of them, thoſe actions

actions that be of themſelves and in their own nature lawful, yet throw your corruption they are capable af exceſs and inordinateneſs: The ſly and ſubtile inſinuations of Satan (under a pretence of your own Chriſtian liberty in going as far as you may) will carry you ſomtimes a little further than you ſhould. Exceſſive, and immoderate, and inordinate delight is ſinful, although it be in objects that are not ſinful in themſelves. This in the general concerning all thoſe actions.

2*ly*. In particular: 1. Of Labour.

1. Touching the Natural Actions in particular; as firſt of labour, whether it be done in the ſweat of the brow, or of the brain, (indeed a Miniſters labour conſiſts of both) you muſt (at leaſt) own one of thoſe; God made the *Leviathan* to ſport in the Sea; but never any man to ſport on the earth: every man muſt go forth to ſome work or other till the evening, *Pſal.* 104.23,26. there muſt be either manual or mental labour.

2 Take thoſe few Directions to managa your heart in your honeſt employment and labour. *Dir*: 1: Beg of God for ability of body in your labour: 'twas part of the Ser-

pents curſe, *Gen:*3:14: [*Upon thy belly ſhalt thou go*] ſome think that God cut him ſhorter by the feet, becauſe he is ranked among the beaſts of the field, *verſ:* 1: and not among creeping things: Have you the uſe of your limbs for your liberty? Oh! bleſs God for it, eſpecially if you be ſtrong to labour: If it be a priviledge in Oxen, *Pſal.* 144. 24. Much more in men.

Direct. 2. Pray that your mind may be ſuitable to your labour as well as your body; when there is unſuitableneſs 'twixt the mind of man and his employment, then the work never comes kindly off, nor goes it comfortably end-wayes; either your chariot wheels are taken off, and then you drive heavily; or they want Unction, and then they make a creaking repining noiſe, much unlike the chariots of *Aminadab*, or of a willing People, as the word ſignifies. 'Tis the Lord that qualifies *Bezaleel* (that was but a poor Brick-maker in *Egypt*) for working all curious work, *Exod.*21:3: And the Husband-man's God doth teach him, and inſtruct him in all his points of Husbandry, *Iſa.*28. 26.

Dir. 3. See that thou purſue your worldly

ly employment with an heavenly frame of heart, ſetting God always before you, *Pſal* 16. 8. and being in the fear of God all the day long, *Prov*: 23: 17: evermore ſending forth ſpiritual Ejaculations, as *Nehemiah*, and *David* did; this is, *to pray alwayes*, Eph 6. 18. and *to pray continually*, 1 Theſ: 5: 17 *viz.* keeping your heart in a continual praying frame; your leaky veſſel (as foreſaid) requires you to ply continually this pump of Prayer.

Direct. 4. Depend upon God for a bleſſing upon your daily labours. *Abraham's* ſervants prayed for ſucceſs in his Enterpriſe, *Gen*: 24: 12: And *Moſes* prays, *Lord proſper the work of our hands*, Pſal: 19. *ult.* 'Tis true, God may give ſucceſs without it, but never ſo ſweet as with it; *Except the Lord build the houſe, &c.* Pſa: 127: 1: 'Tis not your diligence alone, but God's bleſſing that enriches, *Pro*: 10: 4--22. *You may not aſcribe to your own power*, Deut: 8: 17: nor ſacrifice to your own Net, *Hab.* 1: 16: As that proud Prince did, *Ezek*: 29: 2: Alas all your policy and power without prayer, is but *Arena ſine calce*, Sand without Lime; Man's diligence muſt be ſubordinate to Gods

bleſſing

bleſſing, then your labour ſhal not be in vain in the Lord. God will bleſs your basket and ſtore, *Deut:* 28: 5: Though you gather little, you ſhall have no lack, the bleſſing of God will make it up at Homer, *viz.* ſufficient for you, *Exod:* 16: 18: and your little ſhal be better than the riches of many wicked, *Pſal:* 37: 16.

The ſecond Natural Action is Reſt or Recreation.

1. You may look upon Reſt and Recreation as lawful upon a twofold account: 1: Reſt from Labour, and refreſhing the Body and Mind, are neceſſary, becauſe Man's nature is like the Bow, which being always bent, is eaſily broken: Therefore did the Lord appoint the Night to ſucceed the Day, and the Sabbath to ſucceed the Week, as fit ſeaſons for Man to reſt from his labours in; now that which is neceſſary is alſo lawful (for God never neceſſitates a Man to ſin againſt him; and if Reſt be lawful, then is ſome Recreation (which is cal'd ſo, as a ſecond Creation) in due time and place; there muſt be *Otium* as well as *Negotium*. The ſecond account is, your Chriſtian

ſtian liberty (which Chriſt hath purchaſed for you) extends himſelf not only to uſe the Creatures of God for neceſſity, but alſo for meet and convenient delight; you may delight your ſelf in God's great goodneſs, *Neh*, 9. 25. You may be Righteous over-much in denying your ſelf ſuch a free uſe of the Creature (yea, and condemning it too) which you are allowed to have by the purchaſe and promiſe of Chriſt. Thus *Iſaac* (who was the moſt loving Husband in holy Writ, for 'tis ſaid of him, and of none elſe, that he loved his Wife, *Gen*. 24: 67:) *Sported with* Rebeccah *his Wife*, Gen. 26. 8: And the *Jew* was commanded to cheer up the heart of his Wife the firſt year, *Deut*: 24: 5, And *Solomon* bids the Husband *be alwayes raviſhed with her beauty*, Prov: 5: 18, 19: Thus *Ezekiels* Wife was call'd *the deſire of his eyes*, Ezek: 24: 16: Aſſuredly men ought to take ſingular Complacency in their Wives company, and yet without all uxorioufneſs: None queſtions Parents dandling their Children upon their knees, as old *Joſeph* did his Grand-children, *Gen*. 50: 23: *Iſa*: 66 12.

2: But then you muſt take the following Di-

rections for managing your heart aright in your Reſt or Recreations.

1. *Direct.* You muſt take heed of waſting too much precious time therein: Indeed we do not ſo much want time, as waſt time; a vain expence of that time, (which either your general calling requires in holy duties, or your particular calling calls upon you for in neceſſary employments) is not only unlawful, but abominable? you are commanded to redeem time, *Eph.*5.16. but never to paſs time: the loſs of time is ſuch a precious thing that God commands ſatisfaction for it, *Exod.* 10.19. It will be but a poor reckoning at your Lords returning, in your accompt for expence of your talent of time; *Item*, ſpent ſo many dayes or hours in Recreation: Oh what would the damned in Hell give for but one of thoſe hours which we have wilfully waſted! Time is like the Urchion or Hedg-hog that muſt not be handled by the head, but by the heels, in its going from you; take time while time ſerves.

2. *Dir.* The ſecond Direction is, be ſure you be moderate in your Recreation; 'tis

compared to honey, it muſt be taken upon the tip of the finger only, and not whole handfuls of it, for fear of ſurfeiting: *Omne nimium vertitur in vitium*; alas mans weak heart is ſoon overcharged, *Luk.* 21. 34. and ſoon grows frothy, fooliſh, if not ſenſual and ſinful in it; you muſt know, that the holy end of Recreation is to fit you the more for the duties of your general and particular calling (in caſe of wearineſs of body, or tiredneſs of mind) but if it indiſpoſe you to either or both, your heart doth deceive you; ſuch as ſpend their lives in ſports, and their livelyhood too, will prove but bad accomptants, when they bring in the broken Accounts of their Stewardſhip to their Lord and Maſter at the laſt day.

3. *Direct.* The third Direction is, chuſe your Recreations that are of beſt report, and of leaſt offence, *Phil.* 4. 8 1 *Cor:* 8: 13. You may not make any of Gods Judgments or puniſhments for ſin (either in man or beaſt) the matter or object of your ſport and recreation, as the folly of the natural fool, the antipathy of beaſts (whereby they tear and deſtroy one another)

which

which are fruits of the Fall, and of mans Rebellion againſt God; it ſhould be rather matter of mourning than of rejoycing. Neither may you chuſe (for your ſport) whatſoever moves troubleſome paſſions, as fear, anger, &c. nor thoſe wherein is a lot (which is a religious act and an ordinance of God) which ought not to be ſported with:

4. *Dir.* The fourth Direction is; having pitch'd upon ſuch Recreations as are harmleſs and ſinleſs, yet may you not ſtain them with bad Companions, ſuch as you cannot conſort with, but you muſt either countenance ſin, or contract ſin; ſuch as you muſt contract either guilt or grief, as before. All Tares muſt be bundled together; ſuch as ſpend their time together in ſports on earth, may howl in hell together to all eternity.

5. *Dir.* The fifth Direction: notwithſtanding all, yet muſt you account it ſafer not to truſt your heart with any Recreation at all, any further than is plainly neceſſary: get (therefore) up your heart to live without them, and take up your whole delight in God, *Pſal.* 37: 4. Then it

at any time you be constrained to use them you will be as if you used them not, 1 *Cor.* 7.29. and *as not having, yet still having*, 2 *Cor* 6.10. that is, your heart will not be engaged to any thing but to God, and your affections will keep uppermost for Jesus Christ: the truth is, were but our affections more mortified, and spiritual duties more natural to us, we might better live without those, than the Philosophers (as they said) could dine and sup without musick; therefore as *Joshuah* haughed the *Canaanites* Chariots-horses, *Josh.* 11: 6—9: and *David Zobah's*, 2 *Sam.* 8. 4. so intreat thy *Joshuah*, thy Jesus the Son of *David*, to hough thy carnal affections, that as *Phaetons* Chariot-horses, they set not all on fire; then delight in God, and thou'lt need less the delights of the world.

The third natural Action is feeding your belly

1. The 3*d*. Natural Action is feeding your belly, which is daily work, for our tottering tabernacles of clay stand in need to be supported with the staff of daily bread, and therefore is our life call'd *the life of our hands*, Isa. 57. 10. as our hands are daily (yea,

(yea hourly) adminiſtring ſomething either back or belly, to ſupport our life. Thoſe common actions (of feeding and clothing us) are ſteps in our Chriſtian converſation, and therefore ought not to be deſpiſed, but are rather to be regulated and reformed to their ſupream ſcope. *to wit*, Gods Glory.

1 *Dir.* Hence your firſt Direction is, Be ſure you eat and drink with an aim at the Glory of God, 1 *Cor.*10.31. You muſt eat for God, and drink for God; *Quicquid agas propter Deum agas*, do all in reference to God; receive not any of Gods bleſſings with a carnal frame of heart; but look upon all your temporal mercies (ſet before you on the Table) with a ſpiritual eye, and improve them with a ſpiritual heart. Good old *Iſidore* wept at his Table, crying out, *I am aſhamed that I ſhould feed on corruptible beaſts, whereas I was created to be a companion of Angels, and to feed upon heavenly food with them.* A worthy Miniſter of *Scotland* was ſaid to eat, drink and ſleep eternal life, for in thoſe earthly and natural actions he ſtill kept an heavenly and ſpiritual heart. The main weight of his meditations was laid upon God (the giver of them) and his glory.

Oh could you but eat to his glory, & drink to his glory, you would not ſo eaſily ſin in them.

2 *Dir.* The ſecond Direction: Feed your ſelf with a God-bleſſing heart, which is the true ſpiritual heave-offering, *Numb.* 15. 19. When your heart is heaved or lifted up to God, and in every thing gives thanks ſaying, Oh what charges do you put God to, in conſuming his Corn and his Cattle, *Hoſ.* 2. 8, 9. As *Jacob* calls *GOD the God that fed him all his life long*, Gen. 48. 16. Yet what an unprofitable ſervant are you, and what an undutiful Son? even ſuch as God complains of *Iſai.* 1. 2. *I have nouriſhed and brought up children, and they have rebelled againſt me.* You muſt admire and adore God that is ſo good, and does ſo good to you, who are ſo evil, and do ſo evil to him; cry, *I am leſs than the leaſt of all thy mercies*, Gen. 32. 10. Have high thoughts of God, and low of your ſelf; the ſame *Jacob* that had pleaded his merit with *Laban*, Gen: 31: 38—41. yet here ſets a low rate on himſelf to God.

3 *Dir.* The third Direction: whatever ſweetneſs you find in any creature (you feed

feed upon) let it lead you to the ſpring-head of that ſweetneſs; do you ſay, Is there ſo much favour in thoſe derivative gifts? there muſt needs be much more in the original giver: Labour to ſwim up thoſe ſtreams till you reach the ſpring; crying, *If mercy be ſo good, Oh what is the God of mercy? Oh that I may come at him, as well as at his mercies!* and learn to love God for himſelf, as well as for his benefits; delighting your ſelf in Gods goodneſs as well as in that of the creatures, *Neh:*9.25.

4 *Dir.* The fourth Direction: You may not feed your ſelf without fear, as thoſe in *Jud.*12, 1. But firſt, ſanctifie it by Prayer, 1 *Tim:*4:4,5. Look on that bread which is not got in an honeſt Vocation, and ſanctified by an holy Invocation, to be no wholſome bread, but ſuch as may prove diſeaſes to your body, and ſin to your ſoul: If wicked men ſay, we will neither eat nor drink till we have killed *Paul*, Act. 23. 12. then godly men muſt ſay, we will neither eat nor drink till we have call'd on God, as 1 *Sam.*9.31. *Mark* 6:41. *Act.* 27. 35. That God may command his bleſſing, *Deut.*28. 8. upon your Table that you have your mer-

cies not only with his leave, but also with his love; not only from his hand, but also from his heart; not only out of the Court of Christs general providence, but also out of the Court of special favour. 2. Feed soberly: Sobriety will reclaim you from being either unseasonable in time, or unreasonable either in matter or measure, either in quantity or quality: 1. Not unseasonable as to time, *Eccl.* 10, 16. not as luxurious persons, that serve their bellies in the morning (that golden hour for Prayer) before they serve their God; nor as those in *Amos* 6.4.6. that Feasted riotously, without laying to heart the afflictions of *Joseph*; while *Joseph* was in the Pit; alas, his Brethren pitied him not, *Gen.* 32:23: 2. Neither must it be unreasonable either for matter or measure; 1. Not for matter or quality, as the rich Glutton, *that fared deliciously every day*, Luk: 16: 19: as Purple and Silk was his daily clothing, so costly delicacies was his daily Food; but (alas) it was all his Heaven he had, as *Abraham* told him when he was in Hell. You must set a knife to your throat, that is, to your concupiscible appetite (which stands more in need

need of a bridle than a ſpur) as to thoſe things, *Prov*:23:2,3,20: and ſay with *David Let me not eat of their dainties*, Pſal: 141:4: and with *Daniel*, refrain *from them for fear of a ſnare*, Dan:1:8: Nor 2. Muſt it be unreaſonable for meaſure or quantity: fulneſs of bread was *Sodoms* ſin, *Ezek.* 16.49: her *Food was fuel for her laſciviouſneſs*; you may not make proviſion for the fleſh *to fulfil the luſts thereof*, Rom: 13: *ult.* then is your fulneſs and exceſs when it overcharges you, *Luk*:21:34: and diſenables you for the duties of either your general or particular calling. 3: When you have eaten and are full, *then bleſs the Lord your God*, *Deut*:8:10. when you are as *Napthali*, ſatisfied with favour, and filled with the bleſſings of the Lord, *Deut*:33:23: then give God ſolemn thanks for all, and be not like prophane *Eſau*, that ſat down to eat and drink, and roſe up and went his way; never reflecting upon himſelf, nor bleſſing God for his mercies; nor like the hog under the Apple-tree, that gluts himſelf with the Fruit that falls, but never looks up to the Tree from whence they fall.

This

This is not to eat every morſel as dipt in Chriſts blood, and is ſtrain'd through the Covenant to take off the curſe inflicted on all creatures for the firſt ſinner.

The fourth Natural action is clothing your body.

The fourth natural action is clothing your body, wherein the pride of your heart may deceive you, *Obad.*3. Therefore take theſe Directions.

1. The firſt Direction: Ponder the Original of your clothing; it was not in the ſtate of innocency, for then was there neither parching heat, nor pinching cold; and nakedneſs was then no ſhame but a glorious comelineſs; ſhame is the daughter of ſin, which brought in the firſt clothing as well as diſtemperature of air (in heat and cold) the fruits of the fall: Remember that nakedneſs of the ſoul brought in the firſt clothing for the body; ſo that 'tis but the badge of man's ſhame, and the token of his rebellion againſt his Maker; it carries along with it a ſecret confeſſion of his own guilt. You may not then be proud of your Apparel, for that is to be

proud

proud of your own ſhame; no man is proud of a plaiſter on his ſore, for that demonſtrates there is a wound; no Thief is proud of his Fetters, for they declare he he hath offended the law, and that heinouſly; neither muſt you be of your garments, which are the cover of your ſhame, and the ſign of your ſin.

2. The ſecond Direction: Take notice that all your clothing are but borrowed things; how do you borrow the skin, hair & wool of bruit beaſts, to cover your nakedneſs withal, and what are your ſilks, but the ſpittle and excrements of a poor worm? All (as it were) the very caſt-apparel of unreaſonable creatures: Man lives on borrowing, and that from things that are worſe than himſelf in reſpect of their nature. Therefore you may not be proud of theſe things that you borrow; no creature ſo begarly, ſo needy as man is, in point of clothing; for every creature brings its clothing into the world with it, but you were born a naked creature, and muſt borrow all to cover you, *Ezek.* 16. 4, 6: And will you be proud (as the Crow in the Fable) of your borrowed Feathers? you may well

well know, that your God doth not cover you for any ſuch end.

3. The third Direction: Inſtead of proud reflections on your ſelf, uſe holy Soliloquies with your ſelf; ſaying; 1 I have a naked Soul to cover (as well as a naked body) and therefore muſt look out for the wedding garment, *to wit*, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt (both imparted and imputed) I muſt put on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *Rom.* 13,14. that I may not be found naked, *Rev.* 16.15. but that I may be comely to God as well as to man. 2. The putting off your clothing at night, ſhould mind you of putting off the old man, *&c. Eph.*4.22. and of putting off your Tabernacle of corruption, 2 *Pet:*1:14. 2 *Cor:*5: 2, 3, 4. and then muſt you go down to the bed of the grave, there to ſleep till the morning of the Reſurrection. 3. When you put on your clothing again in the morning, it ſhould mind you, that you muſt be raiſed out of the bed of the grave, and then *corruption ſhall put on incorruption, and mortality ſhall be ſwallowed up of life*, 1 Cor.15.53. 2 *Cor:* 5.4. if you have put on the new man, the image of God in Chriſt.

The second sort of Actions are Civil, as your Commerce and Trading with others.

The second sort of Actions are Civil, as your Commerce and Trading with others.

1. Direction the first: That you may be kept from sinning herein, get your heart fraught with the fear of God, as *Joseph*, Gen.42.18. & *Neh.*5.9,15. those good men had a curb upon them to restrain them from wronging others; and where this curb is not, men will not stick at any sin, as *Gen.*20.11.

2 *Dir.* Lay your souls under that command of God in the Old Testament, *Lev.* 25.14. [*In buying and selling ye shall not oppress one another.*] And under that in the New, 1 *Thess.*4:6: [*Defraud not one another*] and fall down before the authority of those commands, as one that must give an account of all.

3 *Dir.* As you are to observe Gods Precepts, so must you [*godly presidents*] especially that of Father *Abraham*, Gen: 23:15: *The land is worth* 400 *sickels*, if so then *Abraham* cannot be cozened; here is fair dealing from heathens; the seller doth not ask too much, nor the buyer bid too little; only one price

price is pitch'd upon, and paid down, and is done: For ſuch bargains be made among Chriſtians.

4. *Dir.* Put your ſelf in your Chapman's ſtead, and do to him as you would have him do to you in the like caſe, *Mat.* 7. 12, *Job* 16. 4. The *buyer* ſhould put himſelf in the *ſeller's* ſtead, and the *ſeller* in the *buyer's*.

5. *Direct.* Get your hearts weaned from all immoderate love of the World; the love of mony is the root of all evil, 1 *Tim* 6: 10: hence comes all cozanage, ſuppoſing that gain is Godlineſs, which is no other than a worſhipping of Mammon. View but (in your Contemplations) once a day the joyes of Heaven, and 'twill wean you by degrees from thoſe toys of the earth.

6. *Direct.* Eſteem highly of honeſty and holineſs in all actions; and that far above wealth or honour; 'Tis indeed wages to it ſelf, *Pſal.* 19. 11: *In keeping them there is great reward.* But you may ſay of defrauding, as *Gen.* 27: 12, It will bring a curſe, and not a bleſſing.

The third ſort of Actions are Religious.

The third ſort of Actions are Religious, which

which are either private or publick; The firſt of which will diſcover your ſtate beſt to you; for every man is, what he is in private; and a truly pious ſoul will be found in Religious actions as well in the ſhade, as in the ſun; he will make conſcience of duty, as well when no body ſees him (for he knows he's always under the all-ſeeing eye) as when any or many ſee him; you muſt go beyond the hypocrite in the practice of ſecret duty. As, 1: In hearty bewailings of your own imperfections; 2: In hearty bleeding acknowledgments of your unkindneſſes to Chriſt, and to his gracious Spirit; 3: In partings and inquietations of Soul after Union and Communion with God; 4: In hungrings and longings after ſpiritual refreſhment, and transforming of ſoul in every duty.

The unſound heart is a ſtranger ro thoſe addreſſes to God (or at moſt, but ſlight in them, if found in that work at all) he is careleſs in ſelf-examination, curſory in meditation, faint in heart-watchings, and feeble in mortification; but nothing at all in loving and walking with God, and delighting in him. Do you more than he in all theſe;

these; and be but a good Christian in private duties, and you cannot be a bad one in publick.

1 More particularly concerning Religious Actions: And,

1: Of Meditation, that most necessary and much neglected duty; this must be (1) your spiritual Ladder (as *Jacob* had his) whereon you ascend in divine Contemplations of the excellency of your blessed and bleeding Saviour, till your heart be ravished therewithal.

2: Meditation must be (2) your spiritual limbeck, whereby the choicest and noblest spirits may be extracted. Oh how this divine limbeck will cause tears to distill and drop down into Gods bottle as their receiver, *Psal:*56:8:

3 The great book of nature (with its three leaves of Heaven, Earth and Sea) as well as the blessed Book of Scripture, may hereby afford you a rich spirit and quintescence. The first leaf of that Book, *to wit*, heaven, may afford you many divine Lectures; as first the purity of Heaven may teach you the purity of its Maker, who made it of such pure matter as you behold; and the

purity

purity alſo that ought to be in your heart that this pure God may dwell in it as in his palace, temple, and lower heaven; yea, and the purity of your life likewiſe, as becometh one that expects to live for ever in that pure heaven into which no impure thing can ever enter.

4. When you behold; 2. The glory and ſplendor of Heaven, both by night and by day; 1. By night, how is it beſpangled with glittering and glorious Stars, then think with your ſelf that this ſplendid firmament (which I behold) is but the outſide of the palace of God, and the under-ſeiling only thereof; and if that have ſo much luſtre and beauty, how much more hath the inſide, where the divine tranſcendent Majeſty of the Trinity (with innumerable both of glorious Angels, and of glorified Saints) ſhineth forth!

5. And 2. by day; when you behold how one Sun makes a moſt glorious Morning when it ariſeth; and when you ariſe out of your bed, then meditate; O what ſhall the morning of the Reſurrection be! 'twill be ten thouſand times more glorious when the Son of righteouſneſs ſhall ariſe

and with him Myriads of Saints and Angels (which ſhall be all ſeven times brighter than the Sun of the firmament. If it be a pleaſant thing (as *Solomon* telleth you) to behold the Sun, then think how 'tis more pleaſant (yea and profitable too) for you to behold the Son of Righteouſneſs; *that in his light you may ſee light*, Pſal. 36.9.

6. When you view the changeableneſs of the face of Heaven, and its outward appearance unto you; this may teach you in the third place, that as the Heaven is ſometimes bright, and ſometimes clouded, not all night, nor all day; the Sun ſometimes over-caſt with a black cloud, and ſometimes breaking out in its ſplendor and glory; and as the Moon hath her changes and her borrowed light, ruling the night, as the Sun the day, ſo you may not expect any fixed conſtancy in any condition upon earth, while there is ſuch changeableneſs in the face of heaven.

7. When you conſider 4. the firmneſs of the body of heaven, how it hath continued firm and unworn (notwithſtanding its motion (which wears all other things) is with incredible ſwiftneſs) from the creation

ion of the World, then did the Lord ſpread out that heaven like a curtain, and it hath continued ſpread for almoſt ſix thouſand years, yet not one hole can be diſcerned in that curtain to this day: Oh how may this teach you the unchangeableneſs of God who was the Creator and is the upholder of Heaven, and what a ſafe place heaven is, to lay up your treaſure in, ſo far out of the reach of all ruſt and robbery.

The ſecond leaf in the book of nature is, 1. The Earth, which the heaven oft hears, and waters with ſhowers of bleſſings; ſometimes God ſtops up cloſe bottles of heaven, and ſometimes he opens them. *Speak to the Earth and it ſhall teach you*, Job 12. 8. How the clouds are Gods watering pot, and his ſpunges which he ſqueezes with a gentle hand, that the rain may ſoftly deſcend and drop fatneſs upon the furrows of the earth. Conſider, Oh what dependency hath man upon God! the Rain hath no farther but God; the vanities of the Gentiles cannot give rain, *Jer.* 14.22.

2. Meditate how the air blows upon the earth, yet is inviſible; and although it be ſo, yet is it the preſerver of your life, which

is nothing but a vapour, and a little warm breath turned up and down the noſtrils: how may this put you in mind of the inviſible God, who filleth all things; and in whom you live, move, & have your being?

3. When you conſider how the Earth hangeth in the midſt of the air (poized equally every way) and yet not reeled out of its place this five thouſand years and upward, notwithſtanding the hidious Tempeſts that hath been upon it, and the dreadful Earth-quakes that hath been within it, *Pſal.*104.56. *God laid the foundation of the Earth, that it cannot be removed for ever.* And *he hangeth the earth upon nothing*, Job 26.7. Now if the whole maſſy body of the earth hang ſo ſteadily and ſtedfaſtly upon the powerful precept of God; O then bethink your ſelf, how firmly you ought to hang upon the precious promiſe of God, both for your ſafety in this World, and for your ſalvation in the World to come.

4 Behold the fruits of the Earth, and conſider, that a woman when about fifty years of age is paſt child-bearing; yet this great Mother (the Earth) though ſhe be above five thouſand years old, is not paſt fruit-bearing ſtill; and whence comes it but from

the word of the great Jehovah? *Seed time and harveſt ſhall not ceaſe*, Gen. 8. 22. You ſee the earth is yearly loaden with fruit, Oh then conſider what are the riches of the Throne of God, if there be ſo much upon his Foot-ſtool; ſay alſo within your ſelf, doth your ground and your garden anſwer your expectation, and ſhall not you the expectation of your God; he will have his viſiting time, *Cant.* 6. 11. and will come with his basket upon his arm to gather the fruit of his Vineyard; if he find none to fill his basket, he will lay down his basket, and take up his axe and cut you down, that you may not cumber the ground any more.

5. Your beholding of the Graſs of the field (while you are walking to meditate there as *Iſaac* did, *Gen.* 24. 63.) may mind you of your mortality, and of your withering condition; *All fleſh is graſs*, *Iſai.* 42. 6, 7. that graſs which the ſythe cuts not down in Summer while 'tis young and juicy, the ſharp froſts of an hard winter will wither away; ſo though you eſcape the ſythe of death in the ſummer of your youth (while your bones are full of marrow, and your veins of blood) yet the winter of old age will wither you.

6. When

6: When you behold that variety of trees it may teach you the difference among men; ſome are wild trees, trees of the wood (that is out of the Church) whoſe fruit be crabs & acorns, mask for hogs, not meat and medicine for men, as *Ezek*: 47: 12: Others are trees of Righteouſneſs, planted and watered by the Lord, *Iſa.* 61. 3. As the other by the Devil; and thus ordinary objects (as birds and beaſts, &c.) may be hallowed to an heavenly end. The Ox knows his Owner, the Swallow her ſeaſon.

1. The third leaf in the book of Nature is the Sea, the great and wide Ocean, which yet is but as a babe in the hands of the great God, and as a little infant in ſwadling bands, *Job* 36: 9: If you or any that are near and dear to you be concern'd at Sea, Oh, how may this conſideration comfort you, that your God can as eaſily rule and repreſs the unruly Ocean, as the Mother doth her tender ſuckling, when it is ſwadled up by her hands; 'tis the work of the Almighty to ſet bounds to that raging Element, *Job* 38: 9, 10:

2: Thus alſo it may mind you, that though the Dragon caſt forth floods to drown the

man

man-child, *Rev:* 12: 15: And though the waters of affliction do riſe and rage againſt the Church and Children of God, yet at the rebuke of your God the waters ſhall be abated, and the dry land ſhall appear, *Gen:* 1: 9: & 8: 3: and the Ship (the Church) ſhall come ſafe to ſhore, whatever contrary wind ſhe meets with in the world, *Mat:* 8: 26: & 14: 24:

3: The continual fluctuation of the Sea in its being toſſed with tempeſts to keep it from ſtinking like a ſtanding pool, which, if ſo, would deſtroy the Earth: This may teach you the wiſdom of God in ordering all things, in ſending tides and winds to toſs the waters, and to make them ſome out their mire and dirt, *Iſa:* 57: 20: & ſo keep them from corruption; and likewiſe, how needful it is for you to be afflicted, and to be poured from veſſel to veſſel, that you may not ſettle upon the lees as *Moab* did, *Jer:* 48: 11:

4: Oh the Divine Meditations that holy *David* had on this ſubject of the Sea, in *Pſa:* 107: 23, 24, &c: (although his concernments lay very little in that Element, as he had done before in looking upon the heavens, *Pſal:* 19: 1: & 8: 3: look upon all

with *Davids* ſpectacles and ſpirit, and the Sea (as well as heaven and Earth) will afford you many divine Inſtructions.

It will teach you 1. That your heart (like *Reuben*) is as unſtable as water for for God, and God lives, *Gen.* 49. 4. 2. That the Lord ſitteth upon the floods, *Pſal.* 29. 10. and rules for ever all the fluctuations of your and the Churches afflictions; God ſits when they float and fly away. 3. That Merchants and Mariners (in their Trading and Trafficking by Sea) hang both their ſafety and ſucceſs upon a few Ropes, or rather upon a ſpecial immediate hand of Gods providence. 4. That they which go down into the deep ſee ſuch wonders of the Lord as may convince the worſt Atheiſt in the world; firſt, as the ebbing and flowing of the Sea, which (ſhould it alwayes flow) would ſoon over-flow this Iſland, if the hand of the Lord did not command it back by its ebb: 2. As that it ſhould not ſwell above its *banks*, and break *its ſwadling bands*, by the falling and flowing of ſo many *great Rivers* into it. 3. *As the ſaltneſs of its waters*, although all thoſe mighty Rivers that flow into it be freſh, and the

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innumerable company of fiſh in it be all freſh alſo. 4. As thoſe trade-winds that lye upon the face of the Sea, to further Navigation every way, with many other wonders.

1. Thus far of occaſional Meditation upon the book of nature; there is alſo Meditation appointed upon the book of Scripture, which you muſt be acquainted with, as far exceeding the other; for the book of nature, though never ſo diligently read over, yet will it not bring you to the ſaving knowledg of God in Chriſt, nor throughly furniſh you for every good work but the book of Scripture is a larger field, furniſhed with all ſorts of ſpiritual and fragrant flowers, whereupon you may freely feed your beſt thoughts without ever nauſeating. If you can but unclaſp the tables of your own heart (when you unclaſp your Bible) a praying heart can never want a profitable ſubject; Oh let it not pleaſe you that carnal hearts can think of things below, not only an hour, a day, a week, a moneth, but even a whole year without wearineſs, and that to think on Gods name *Mal.* 3. 17. ſhould weary you ſo ſoon. 2. This ſecond ſort of meditation is a ſet & ſolemn act-ing

of the ſoul upon ſome choſen ſubject, till you can extract ſome ſweet and ſoul-raviſhing thoughts out of your own heart thereby; your ſubject or matter of meditation muſt be ſome ſcriptural truths, ſuch as are ſummarily comprehended in *Phil.* 4. 8. (that little Bible) *Whatſoever things are true, whatſoever things are honeſt, whatſoever things are juſt, whatſoever things are pure, whatſoever things are lovely, whatſoever things are of good report; if there be any vertue, if there be any praiſe, think on theſe things.* In that one *Verſe* is contained the whole duty of Man, the good and the All of man, *Eccleſ.* 12. 13. *Mic.* 6. 8.

The ſecond Religious Action is Prayer, which well follows Meditation; for as: 1. Meditation is a bleſſed beginning to prayer, ſo prayer is a bleſſed concluſion of meditation, & therefore is the double reading of *Gen.* 24: 63: *Iſaac* went out to meditate, or he went out to pray. So then when your heart is weell watmed with the Angelical duty of Meditation, then fall upon the Evangelical duty of Prayer, then tender and render your homage to the God of all

your mercies, crying with *David*, *Oh the God of my mercies*, Pſal. 59. 10.

2. You muſt know, that Prayer is the pouring out of the heart to God, *Pſal.* 62. 8. 'Tis not the pouring out of your ſpeech but of your ſpirit unto the Lord. God looks not ſo much at what you do, as with what ſpirit you do for him; you muſt ſerve God with your ſpirit in the Goſpel of his Son, *Rom* 1. 9. not reſting in a bare gift of Prayer, without the grace of Prayer, *Zech.* 12. 10. you may not fetch materials or abilities for this work from your ſelf, but you muſt pray in the Holy Ghoſt, *Jude.* v. 20. *Rom.* 8. 26. The lifting up of your own tools upon Gods Altar, will not poliſh, but pollute it, *Exod.* 20. *ult.* That earneſtneſs in prayer which flows meerly from a natural ſpirit, is but the cry of the creature and not the groans of that holy ſpirit which helps our infirmities; but expreſſions without impreſſions.

3. You muſt pray that God may rebuke Satan that reſiſts you in prayer; watch the adverſary that watches you, and watch your own heart likewiſe, which will not only hang off from this work, but will alſo con-

conſpire with Satan to give you diſturbance when you are breathing out your deſires into your Fathers boſom, and ſending this winged Meſſenger to him: you will find it hard to ſerve the Lord (in this duty) without diſtraction, as 1 *Cor.*7:35. No enemy like one treacherous within.

4. Take heed of formality in this duty; as a Muſicians finger will run over ſuch a ſong as he hath often played, although his mind all the while be employed about other things; ſo many run over ſuch a prayer as they have often uſed, yet their hearts are roving (all the time) about other things. God requires the ſtrength of your affections in his ſervice; every offering muſt be made by fire, if of a ſweet ſavour to the Lord, *Lev.*1.9.13,17. yea your ſelf, as well as your ſacrifice, muſt be ſalted with fire, *Mark* 6. 49. *David* prayed and cried with his whole heart, *Pſal.* 119, 58, 145. *Samſon* bows himſelf with all his might at the Pillars of *Dagons* Temple, *Judg.*16.30. and have not you the ſtrongholds of ſin in you to be pull'd down by Prayer. You muſt go to prayer as the Sun in its ſtrength, *Judg.*5.31. and come to God as a

Prince,

Prince, *Job* 31.37. the Sun in his might doth diſperſe clouds that would darken it; and a princely ſpirit to wreſtle with God, as *Jacob* hath power with God, and prevaileth for the bleſſing: to put off God with cold formal devotion, is the epidemical diſeaſe of all Chriſtendom.

5. Be not regardleſs about the returns of your prayers, nor careleſs of the events and iſſue of them; be not like thoſe Archers that ſhoot not at a mark, but at rovers, at random, never obſerving where their arrows fall. Spiritual prayers are the arrows of Gods deliverance, 2 *King* 13. 16,17. Prayer is like the Bow of *Jonathan*, 2 *Sam.* 1. 22. It never returns empty. If you dare be careleſs in asking, how can you wonder that God is careleſs in anſwering?

6. Be clothed with Humility while you are in prayer to God: He that reſiſts the proud, gives grace to the humble. In order hereto, get the Majeſty of the great God (with whom you have to do therein) wrought kindly upon your heart, till you know (aright) your diſtance, not only your natural diſtance 'twixt God and you, as you are a creature; but eſpecially your mortal diſtance 'twixt God and you as you are a ſinner

In the third place I ſhall add but one Religious action more, *viz.* 1. The Obſervation of the Sabbath, which yet is, *inſtar omnium*, where-

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in all religious actions are ſummarily comprehended. You muſt look upon the Sabbath as the Epitome and Compendium of a Religion, having all the priviledges that commend the moſt ſubſtantial precepts in Scripture to us, as 1. Its frequent mentioning (almoſt), in every book of the Bible. 2. God's intereſt (after a ſpecial manner) in it; 'tis frequently call'd [*His*] Sabbath. And 3*ly*. 'Tis called a ſpecial gift and favour of God to his People, *Exod.* 16. 29. *Ezek.* 20. 12. *Neh.* 9. 14. 'Tis a great favour for God that it is given to you.

2. Therefore you muſt remember to keep it holy, *Exod.* 20. 8. (it may be read thus) *Remember to keep holy a day of reſt unto me: Six dayes ſhalt thou labour, but a ſeventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.* The very Preface [*Remember*] which none of the other Commands have, inſtructs you, how weighty and neceſſary this duty is, which you are prone to forget.

3. That you may keep it holy, you muſt (in the firſt place) have an high and holy eſtimation of it; the phraſe is, *He that eſteemeth a day, and he that regardeth a day*, Rom. 14. 5, 6. You muſt have an high regard for it, and eſteem it honourable, *Iſa.* 58. 13. *As the day which the Lord hath made*, Pſal. 118. 12. (This Chriſt applyes to the day of his Reſurrection, *Mat.* 21. 24.) How can it but be an honourable day to you which the Lord your God hath ſanctified for you? 2*ly*. As you muſt have an holy eſtimati-

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on of it, so you must make an holy preparation for it; you must prepare *to meet your God, Amos* 4. 12. As the Bride prepares her self to meet her Bridegroom; how did *Ruth* wash her self, and anoint her, and put on her best raiment, that she might become amiable, and accepted to *Boas*? Ruth 3. 3. How much more should you be purified for the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords! The *Jews* had a preparation for the passeover, *Joh.* 19. 42. you must make preparation for the Sabbath, the want of which may hinder your soul of a Sabbath-blessing, as (no doubt) it has done. *3ly.* You must keep it holy by an holy observation of it, in using all holy means, and doing all holy duties (both private and publick) all the whole day.

4. Be sure it be a desirable day to you, as well as holy and honourable; it should be the desire of dayes. You should cry (with that good man) to it in the morning of the Sabbath. Come my bride of dayes, thou art welcome; and with *David* say, *Oh when shall I come and appear before my God,* Psal. 42. 2, Where are your pantings and palpitations of heart after an enjoyment of Gods Sabbath? You have six dayes to provide for the worser part, and but one for the better: how careful are you all the six dayes for the beast in you? Oh, be not careless upon that one day for the Angel in you.

5. Let not your hold go of any one precious Sabbath, without some sweet refreshment to your

soul

ſoul, as well as reſt to your body; 'tis ſaid, *Exod* 31. 17. *The Lord reſted and was refreſhed*; is it ſo with you? do you find any reſt for your wandring thoughts, and any refreſhing for your feeble ſpirit? Account it a very great loſs to loſe one Sabbath-day without ſome advantage and growth: Oh what a God-bleſſing heart ſhould you have, that God ſhould give you ſuch a day, and call upon you alſo (and that often) to obſerve that day: and that not for any advantage to himſelf (for *your goodneſs extends not to God*, Pſal. 16. 3. though his doth to you) but all for your own good. This obliges you to be careful and conſcientious in the improvement of the day, and honouring the Son with his day under the Goſpel, as they honoured the Father with his day under the Law, *Joh.* 5. 23.

6. You ſhall aſſuredly be bleſſed, if you keep the Sabbath which God bleſſed, *Iſa.* 56. 2. 1. With Holineſs here; the power of godlineſs lives and dies with the keeping of the Sabbath. 2. You ſhall be bleſſed with Happineſs hereafter; ſuch as keep holy this Temporal Sabbath, ſhall be made happy in the Eternal Sabbath; but ſuch as prophane it, ſhall never enter into God's reſt, *Heb.* 3. *ult.* & 4. 9, 10.

FINIS.